

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT M 00496 041444Z

53

ACTION EA-10

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R 041003Z JUN 75

FM AMCONSUL PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 557

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 0496

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, PGOV, PP

SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN OFFICE VIEWS ON SCHEDULE FOR INDEPENDENCE

1. AUSTRALIAN OFFICE (HOLLOWAY) NOW CONSIDERS IT OPTIMISTIC TO EXPECT PNG INDEPENDENCE AS EARLY AS DECEMBER. DEBATE OVER CONSTITUTION AND ORGANIC LAWS COULD EASILY RUN INTO 1976, HOLLOWAY BELIEVES.

2. SOMARE WAS TERRIBLY DISCOURAGED AND DEPRESSED LAST WEEK AND WANTED TO GO FOR AN ELECTION, BUT AUSSIES TALKED HIM OUT OF IT, ACCORDING TO HOLLOWAY. FURTHER, THEY POINTED OUT THAT GOA STILL HAD RESIDUAL POWERS RE ELECTIONS, AND IT WOULD BE HIGH COMMISSIONER, NOT SOMARE, WHO WOULD DECIDE ABOUT ELECTION.

3. HOLLOWAY THINKS SOMARE HAS NOW BOUNCED BACK AND IS RECONCILED TO THE THOUGHT OF A LONG HAUL BEFORE INDEPENDENCE. COMMENT: THIS IS THE MOST PESSIMISTIC TIMETABLE I HAVE YET HEARD, BUT THE AUSTRALIANS MUST HAVE THE INSIDE TRACK. OTHERS ARE SAYING THAT THE MID-SEPTEMBER DATE WOULD

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PAGE 02 PORT M 00496 041444Z

SLIP A FEW WEEKS, OR SOME ARE SAYING UNTIL NOVEMBER OR EVEN

DECEMBER, BUT DECEMBER IS THE LATEST DATE I HAVE HEARD ELSE-
WHERE. HOLLOWAY PUT A VERY GOOD FACE ON DELAY, SAYING IT
REALLY DIDN'T MATTER, AND IN FACT, IT IS BETTER TO LET
BACKBENCHERS TALK THEMSELVES OUT. TONY SIAGURU, SECRETARY,
DFRT, WHO HAS BEEN IN CANBERRA FOR AID TALKS TOLD ME
THAT, TO CONTRARY, GOA IS VERY PEEVED OVER DELAY.
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